

John Nulsen, MD  
Claudio Benadiva, MD, HCLD  
David Schmidt, MD  
Lawrence Engmann, MD, MRCOG  
Andrea DiLuigi, MD  
Daniel Grow, MD, MHCM

Marie Heslin, APRN, ANP-BC  
Deborah Hintz, APRN, ANP-BC  
Glorimar Diaz, APRN, FNP-BC

February 22, 2021

Re: Proposed Bill No. 6321: An Act Concerning Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act

To: The Honorable Gary A. Winfield  
The Honorable Steven J. Stafstrom  
The Honorable Alex Kasser  
The Honorable Matt Blumenthal  
The Honorable John A. Kissel  
The Honorable Craig C. Fishbein  
Joint Committee on Judiciary  
Connecticut General Assembly  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

My name is Kathy Paniati and I live in Burlington, CT. I am currently employed at The Center for Advanced Reproductive Services (CARS), a fertility clinic with offices in Farmington, Hartford, New London and Branford. I have been a Registered Nurse for 32 years, and have been at CARS for almost 7 years. My role is Third Party Reproduction Team Manager, and I work with many singles and couples of the LGBTQ population.

On behalf of CARS, and myself, I would like to go on record in support of the Connecticut Parentage Act (Proposed Bill No. 6321) and I urge you to report this bill favorably.

I have the great privilege of working with many types of parents on their path to family building. Many of these parents to be are members of the LGBTQ population. I wholeheartedly attest to the fact that these intended parents take the most painstakingly deliberate path, with the use of reproductive services because of their strong desire to parent children. After giving their all in terms of psychological, medical and financial means, many of them need to then adopt their own children in order to be recognized as legal guardians of THEIR OWN children.

As a heterosexual parent of two now adult children, I have been recognized as their parent in every city, state and country we have entered. The reality of being a parent in a same sex relationship is markedly different. They often need to fight for, prove and defend their role as parent, while I have been assumed to be the parent of my children, simply because our family presented in the "traditional" way.

Right now, Connecticut is the only state in New England without clear paths to legal parentage for unmarried non biological partners. The Connecticut Parentage Act provides a much needed update that ensures that all Connecticut children and families have equal access to establishing parentage. The Act also corrects various types of parentage discrimination that currently exist in state law. The ACT ensures that children born via ART enjoy the same protections under the law as do all other children.

Over the past two decades, we have seen a change in the number of families seeking our assistance becoming pregnant and giving birth. We complete over 1,600 in vitro fertilization cycles in Connecticut each year. CARS has also seen significant increases in the number of same-sex couples who come to us for help in becoming parents. Given recent data on family formation by LGBTQ people, we expect these trends to not only continue but accelerate.

We want all of the families we service, including LGBTQ families, to know that their relationships with their children are legally secure.

The Connecticut Parentage ACT would update Connecticut's laws to better recognize and protect the full range of children and parents in the state. Please support and favorably report Proposed Bill No. 6321.

Sincerely,



Kathy Paniati, BSN, RN  
Third Party Reproduction Team Manager  
The Center for Advanced Reproductive Services  
2 Batterson Park Road  
Farmington, CT 06032